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ABSTRACT

Designed as a tool for k-12 teachers, this paper includes practical suggestions and sources for using a bulletin board to tell what's going on in the social studies classroom. Information is included on: 1) reasons for using bulletin boards; 2) ways that the boards can be planned and made jointly by students and teachers; 3) general rules to follow in setting up a display; 4) types of bulletin boards teachers can build; 5) a list of suggestions for thematic displays; and 6) an enumeration of sources--federal, association and business concerns -- that produce materials suitable for bulletin board displays. Related documents are SO 005 979 through SO 006 000. (SJM)

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How To Do It Series—No. 4

How To Use a Bulletin Board

National Council for the Social Studies
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Sell Your Product

The classroom bulletin board is a visual aid which can help us "sell our product" to young Americans. Industry has discovered that in most cases consumer knowledge of nationally advertised products is based on information which appears on highway bulletin boards. Businessmen spend more than a hundred million dollars a year for this type of advertising. In every classroom in America we have signboards (too often left bare) which could be potent agencies for selling ideas. Why not use them?

Displays can be used to arouse interest and to motivate work, to initiate a unit, to help develop a topic, or to provide a culminating activity for an individual or the class as a whole. The success of this procedure depends on the use of the material in class, as well as on the effectiveness of the display itself. Bulletin boards can be used to celebrate certain weeks of the year; to make note of special days, seasons, and holidays; to motivate extensive reading in a particular social studies area; to help teach proper attitudes; and to display student work. Bulletin boards should be used to do all of these things. They are barometers that tell what's going on in the classroom.

Work Together

Ideally, bulletin board displays should be planned and made by the students with the guidance of the teacher. Rotating bulletin board committees should act as clearing houses for display material. These committees should be on the lookout for posters, announcements, charts, clippings, data, diagrams, drawings, graphs, maps, models, news items, object pictures, specimens of materials, and pupils' work. Pupils can analyze displays which they see about them daily—movie posters, bus and subway ads, and products advertised in shop windows. They should watch for posterboards and other materials that attract and hold their attention. This observation will help them to become critical and to improve their own work and will suggest many ideas which they may adapt to their own use. Making alphabets of various sizes and colors will help them make that slogan, that catchy phrase, when it is time to put up the displays.

A "morgue" in which to store materials, including old displays that may be re-used, should be the responsibility of the bulletin board committee. This file should be set up by topics that fit conveniently into the pattern of the particular course. A large manila folder can be used to bring together the clippings, pictures, and other materials on each topic. The "morgue" could also include sketches of particularly effective displays observed elsewhere but adaptable to their own use. (No file case for the "morgue"? How about orange crates painted by the art or woodshop classes?) In addition to saving displays to be re-used, a plan of exchange can be worked out with neighboring schools or other classes within your own school. Sometimes local social studies councils can act as centers of exchange for exhibits and displays.

A Valuable Device

Interest can be aroused by information attractively displayed. In addition, developing and arranging such displays calls for group activities which provide excellent experiences in cooperative work. For these two reasons alone the bulletin board is a good teaching device. But there are many other values that teachers and students can derive from a well-managed bulletin board. Through such displays appreciations can be developed;

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improved attitudes and behavior patterns can be instilled; latent talents and skills may be discovered. Bulletin boards may also be used to meet individual needs and to develop the varying capacities and skills of students. Getting the most from a bulletin board requires planning, imagination, time, and energy—but the results are worth it.

Follow a Few Rules

A good display must attract attention. This can be done by using color; a striking picture; an arresting arrangement of material; or an eye-catching label—one that arouses your curiosity but doesn't satisfy it. A student looking at the display should get an idea which will set off a chain of other ideas. The display may ask a question which will provoke other questions associated in the mind of the onlooker with the same problem.

To be successful, the display must hold attention. It will do so if it is developed on a unified theme as expressed in a slogan, a single picture, or a series of pictures. Usually the basic subject should be apparent at a glance. This means the display must not be loaded with superfluous matter. The material thus carefully selected for display should be made the focus of class attention, and should form a major basis of discussion. In short, the display should be a planned part of the classwork.

Simplicity is the key to all good arrangements. An easy way to achieve this is to follow the architectural lines of the bulletin board. Use less material, more carefully selected, to put across an idea. The labels are important. Labels, done in large-sized letters, should be an integral part of the unit of work exhibited.

Mounting paper should take its place in the background. If the mountings are too bright, students will see only dazzling color which distracts from the object of interest.

Color, properly used, however, does attract attention. It has an intrinsic appeal which will command interest whether or not it has any direct bearing on the message of the display. Some devices used to secure concentration of visual interest are: brightness against darkness, warm colors against cool colors, pure colors against gray colors, detail and texture against filminess, and form against (or surrounded by) plain space. Color is more easily retained in the memory than are words or symbols. Color makes the message more realistic. Look around you for materials that might lend a 3-dimensional effect to use as part of your display—coat hangers, wire mesh, yarn, paper doilies—to suggest a few. Put your imagination to work.

So position, size, color, intensity, illustrations, labels and 3-dimensional materials which excite interest all serve to gain and hold attention. Arousing curiosity but not satisfying it impels the spectator to look further into the matter.

Build Your Own

No bulletin boards in the classroom? Some types are easily made, especially if the shop facilities can be used. Or perhaps a shop class can undertake the job as a project. There are several kinds of bulletin boards—the board that is built as a permanent fixture in the room, the movable type which usually is hung from a molding with heavy wire, and the folding variety. A wire strung around the top of the blackboard provides extra space for displaying material and is especially good for exhibiting student-made booklets or stiff posters. A piece of 3 x 4-inch plywood, painted a soft yellow, can be propped in a chalk tray; it makes an attractive addition to a schoolroom. There are other materials that make good inexpensive display boards—celotex or a soft grade of masonite. The location chosen should be well lighted and easily accessible. It should be hung low enough so students can easily read it and it should be planned to fit attractively into the available space.

Tricks of the Trade

Here are some bulletin board suggestions which your students may want to try. Perhaps they will get ideas for other displays from these.

Cowboys. "Git Along Little Dogies" as a caption for a cowboy display might attract attention and create interest in a unit on westward expansion or western life. The pictures might be chosen to set the mood for the unit to be studied rather than to convey specific information. Later, another display might show a cowboy suit with a description of each part explaining why the cowboy wears such a suit. Information for such a display can be found in *The Story of the Cowboy* by Emerson Hough.

Indians. A map of the United States showing where the various Indian tribes settled would serve to introduce the study of such a unit. Around the map place headdresses, tomahawks, and other items of Indian life to attract attention to the display.

Conservation. Themes for displays might include: forest fires—their cost and prevention; how to stop erosion; the problem of the falling water table; flood control—why and how; conservation means wise use, not hoarding; how Americans have used their minerals; wild animals are resources too. Maps, drawings, graphs, and pictures may be combined to present facts, stir the imagination, and call for action on any of these themes. Younger children may use animal pictures (which create a great deal of interest) to show what can happen to ani-

mals in the forests during a long, cold winter. The display may make an appeal to the individual to feed birds in his vicinity during the snow season.

Products. On a table before the bulletin board products from various countries can be exhibited, with a string going from each one to the country from which it came as shown on the bulletin board map.

Pirates and sea dragons. A good way to introduce a unit on early exploration is to cut out of white paper and pin to a blue background a compass, an astrolabe, and the continents of the world. White strings can be used to outline the routes of early explorers.

Field trips. The class can make a bulletin board display as an activity following a field trip. Students can get samples made by a local industry they have visited. They can write up the steps taken to make the product, and a description of their trip.

Student work. A major part of displays consists of the work that is being done in the classroom. To add color to these, why not pin cut-out designs of different shapes and colors here and there around the board? In the spring and fall cut out leaves that are appropriate shades of green, red, orange, and yellow, and pin these around the board. Or why not snowmen with black top hats, brightly colored scarfs and pipes, wandering around a board in the midst of winter? Students can think of similar seasonal themes suitable for any time of the year.

Foreign lands. Exhibits might include articles brought back from a foreign country by local people. Such a display may result in having a guest speaker come in to talk about the country and explain the exhibit.

Good neighbors. Good neighbor displays can be used from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade. One kindergarten teacher teaches the word "neighbor" the first day of school. Her students learn to share and respect the rights of others. Depending on the maturity of the students and the topic being studied, the theme might be "Good Neighbors in Foreign Countries," "A Good Neighbor in Our Town," "Be a Good Neighbor at Home," or "Be a Good Neighbor to Animals."

Ships of the desert. Camels can be shown walking across the sands—the entire bottom of the bulletin board. Facts about Arabia or other desert sections and facts about camels themselves might be included.

Babylon Bugle or Assyrian Gazette. Introduce a unit by posting a dummy page, with headlines only, from imaginary ancient newspapers. The articles which hit the high spots to be covered in the unit can be written by a student committee. Illustrations by students can be made an integral part of this project.

Stamps. For intermediate grade or junior high school boys and girls, a display of stamps of a foreign country or section of the world is often a good introduction to a unit. American history topics can often be illustrated through stamp displays. In many cases there is a stamp collector who will prepare such an exhibit.

Propaganda. In studying the newspaper a class can use the bulletin board as a means of displaying headlines from several different newspapers published on the same day. Lead articles may be included so that students can compare the treatment given the same news story by different papers.

Those Were the Days! Now and Then! The Good Old Days! Horse and Buggy Days! These can be used as captions for displays comparing life today and yesterday. Newspapers can be used for this purpose too. Old newspaper advertisements compared with modern advertisements or mail order catalog commodities create interest. These might be used to trace the development of transportation, farming methods, and communication.

Book jackets. Books for extensive reading in the current unit can be advertised attractively by bulletin board displays. Librarians are glad to have this advertising.

Books. Here are other ways of advertising books. Show a time machine and book jackets with wings added plus a caption *Travel Through Time.* A library in the East had a clock with hands pointing to book jackets which served as the hours. The caption read *Make Time Worthwhile.* Scissors, yarn, hammer and saw can be used to advertise *Do-It-Yourself Books.* Fall, Winter, Spring offer an opportunity to advertise seasonal books dealing with sports and similar topics identified with seasons. Decorate the board with leaves, paper doily snowflakes or flowers. *Summertime—And the Livin' Is Easy* could be a caption for a boy or girl in a hammock (made of net) reading a book; show book jackets on the ground below. *Gone Fishin'* might be the caption for a display showing a boy fishing (Huck Finn type) with a book in his lap; show book titles superimposed on a fish leaping from the water—waves outlined with yarn. *Travel With Books* — Airplanes follow a yarn route on a world map; book titles appear on each plane silhouette.

Cartoons. Students can collect cartoons on a certain subject—such as labor, presidential elections, prices. These can be displayed and then returned to their owners for their own personal collections if they become interested in cartoon collecting as a hobby.

Ribbon maps. A world map is placed on the bulletin board. News events are posted around the outside of the map. Ribbons or colored strings go from each news event to the place on the map where the event occurred.

Research. After class committees have done research

on a certain problem, a brief oral report may be supplemented with material posted on the bulletin board. This material should be arranged so that students can check it out. It is important to know who did the research in case there are further questions. Names of committee members should appear near the research findings.

Local historical exhibits. Students can select certain historical spots in their community and plan an exhibit around each. Drawings, copies of inscriptions, snapshots, newspaper articles, and what history says about our community are some suggestions for this display. Working with the local history museum or society, if there is one, will pay dividends.

Local industries. Material for display purposes can be requested from local industries. Sometimes this material is historical in nature, sometimes of current interest. Many firms are glad to cooperate in supplying such materials and respect the teacher's obligation to guard against advertising in the classroom.

What can I do? Such displays are effective. Pictures to suggest and illustrate several kinds of positive action an individual can take to promote better human relations or better government would be worthwhile.

Travel. For elementary school classes planning to study a country by taking a "trip" around it, a committee might investigate costs of travel. Graphs showing the comparative costs of travel could be displayed on the bulletin board. Travel posters and booklets are available from steamship, airline, bus, and railroad companies. These make colorful displays that can often be tied up with books about a region or a country; or they can be used to introduce a unit of work.

Movie theaters. A member of the bulletin board committee might ask that any posters or other displays dealing with historical movies be saved for the class. Indians, pirates, or other figures in costume cut from these advertisements will help attract attention to an exhibit.

Postcards. Travel folders or postcards which illustrate a class activity are valuable for bulletin board use.

Democracy. One class displayed documents of democracy. The background of this particular board was white. One student drew a train which was pictured traveling around the bulletin board. Another student printed the words, "Freedom is everybody's job!" on the inside of the cars. In the center, on paper that had been carefully aged in an oven, appeared several democratic documents—as many as the board would hold. The first day the display was up the class began a discussion of these famous documents.

Snapshots. Interest in a hobby can be stimulated by a snapshot contest and can be directly tied up with local history. The snapshots, like any other bulletin board material, should be mounted carefully.

Maps. Colorful and informative bulletin board displays result from a good use of maps. By using the opaque projector and flashing an outline of a map on the bulletin board, a large map can easily be traced on the background paper. Then the committee can fill this in to show products, natural resources, railroads, etc.

Civilization highway. A highway running around the room with landmarks added from time to time was a year's project for one class in the study of world history.

National groups. Contributions of various nationality groups can be used as themes for displays. Each nationality might be treated separately, showing famous people of that nationality with a small map of the country from which they came. Or a single display may show the contributions made to America in one field, such as medicine, by people of many lands.

Famous people. Silhouettes of famous people studied, with clues as to their identities, create interest. An opaque projector can help make the silhouettes.

Sports. A display depicting the sports of various countries always has great appeal. This might be centered around the Olympic Games which could be given a better human relations twist by stating that America always selects her best athletes to represent her, regardless of race, creed, or nationality.

Holiday scrapbook. Bulletin board committees can collect material for holiday exhibits or for special days.

Hobby displays. There are lots of ways of showing how to use leisure time to advantage. Stick figures can be made to climb mountains, bicycle, weave, sail, swim, draw, or sew. This type of display can be adapted to any age level. In senior high, for example, hosteling might be advertised by having stick figures cycling up and down mountains and paths all around the bulletin board. Here and there they can stop to cook supper or take a swim. In the center, information about this kind of vacation (available from American Youth Hostels, Inc., 14 West 8th St., New York) could be posted.

Sources of Materials for the Bulletin Board

There are many sources outside the school for bulletin board material. Teachers will know the local sources, such as the Red Cross, Community Chest, Chamber of Commerce, labor unions, and regional offices of federal agencies. At the state level there are various government agencies, such as the conservation department, state development commissions seeking to attract industry, trade, or tourists, and state planning commissions which produce materials suitable for bulletin board use.

There are several federal government agencies that may be investigated for materials. All government agencies can be addressed at Washington, D. C., using the zip code indicated. Some of the federal agencies that produce material useful for bulletin board displays are:

U. S. Department of Agriculture: The Forest Service; Soil Conservation Service; and Information Office. 20250

U. S. Department of Commerce: Coast and Geodetic Survey. 20230

U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare: Office of Education, Division of International Relations, 20202. Public Health Service, 20201

U. S. Department of the Interior: U. S. Geological Survey; Bureau of Reclamation (produces material on the river valley projects); National Park Service (material dealing with National Shrines). 20240

U. S. Department of Labor. 20210

U. S. Treasury Department: Education Section, U. S. Savings Bonds Division. 20220

National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration (documents, photographs and charts)

Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (ask for any specific material) 20402

Associations preparing educational materials which might be used for bulletin boards are numerous. Sometimes materials prepared by these organizations set forth a particular point of view. Among the associations which prepare materials suitable for display are:

American Association for the United Nations, Inc., 345 E. 46 St., New York, N. Y. 10017

American Classical League Service Bureau, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056

Australian News and Information Bureau, 636 5th Ave., New York, N. Y. 10020

American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations, 815 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006

Boy Scouts of America, Nat'l Supply Service Division, New Brunswick, N. J. 08903

British Information Service, 845 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022

Bureau of Indian Affairs Publications List. Publication Service, Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas

Canadian Consulate General, 680 5th Ave., New York, N. Y. 10019

Chamber of Commerce of the U. S., 1615 H St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006

Civic Education Service, Inc., 1733 K Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006

Cooperative Recreation Services, Inc., Delaware, Ohio 43015

Family Service Association of America, 44 E. 23rd St., New York, N. Y. 10010

French Cultural Services, 972 5th Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022

Girl Scouts, Inc., 830 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022

The Harmon Foundation, 140 Nassau St., New York, N. Y. 10017

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1818 H St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20006

League of Women Voters of the U. S., 1200 17th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036

National Conference of Christians and Jews, 43 W. 57th St., New York, N. Y. 10019

National Geographic Society, School Service Division, 17th & M Sts., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036

National Safety Council, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611

National Tuberculosis Association, 1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10019

National Urban League, 14 E. 48th St., New York, N. Y. 10017

Netherlands Information Service, 711 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10017

Pan American Union, Publicity and Distribution Division, Washington, D. C. 20006

United Nations, Department of Public Information, United Nations, N. Y. 10017

In the list which follows are some of the numerous business concerns who distribute books, pamphlets, charts and maps for school use. Some are frank advertising; others mention goods and services only incidentally if at all. Most of the materials are either free or sold at nominal cost.

Aerospace Industries Association of America, Inc., 1725 De Sales St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036

Armour and Co., Public Relations Dept., P.O. Box 9222, Chicago, Ill. 60690 (food source map)

Association of American Railroads, Public Relations Department, Transportation Bldg., Washington, D. C. 20006

Compton, F. E. & Co., 1000 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60610

Denoyer-Geppert Co., 5235 Ravenswood Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60640

Educational Bureau, Newsweek Bldg., 444 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10018 (maps)

Educational Bureau, Time & Life Bldg., 9 Rockefeller Center, New York, N. Y. 10020 (maps)

Ford Motor Co., Educ. Affairs Dept., The American Road, Dearborn, Mich. (9 posters in bulletin board kit)

Friendship Press, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N. Y. 10027

General Electric Co., Products Information, Valley Forge Technology Center, P.O. Box 8555, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101 (space charts)

Grolier Society, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022

Hammond, C. S., Co. 515 Valley Street, Maplewood, N. J. 07040

Historical Publishing Co., Topeka, Kans. 66600 (maps)

Hunt Mfg. Co., P. O. Box 560, Camden, N. J. 08101 (set of 6 lettering charts)

Iroquois Publishing Co., Inc., Syracuse, N. Y. 13202 (time line date charts)
Keystone View Co., Meadville, Pa. 16335 (stereographs)
McConnell School Map Co., 608 E. Madison St., Goshen, Ind. 46526 (maps)
McKinley Publishing Co., 809 N. 19th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19130
Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., Health & Welfare Division, 1 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10010 (health and safety materials; catalog of free materials)
Miller, Bruce, Box No. 369, Riverside, Calif. (series of booklets on free source materials)
Milton Bradley Co., Springfield, Mass. 01100
National Aeronautics & Space Administration, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, D. C. 20546
National Association of Manufacturers, Education Dept., 277 Park Ave., New York, N. Y. 10010
National Forum Foundation for American Education, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60605
National Industrial Conference Board, 845 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022
News Map of the Week, Inc., 1515 Sedgwick Street, Chicago, Ill. 60610
Nystrom, A. J. & Co., 3333 Elston Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60618
Owen, F. A. Publishing Co., Dansville, N. Y. 14437
Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 381 Park Ave. South, New York, N. Y. 10010
Rand McNally & Co., P. O. Box 7600, Chicago, Ill. 60680
School Service, Westinghouse Electric Corp., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15230
Standard Brands, Inc., Educational Services, Room 1212, 420 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y. 10017 (free colorful materials)
Teaching Materials Service, Pleasantville, N. Y. 10570
United Aircraft Corp., 400 Main St., East Hartford, Conn. 06103
United Air Lines, School & College Service, O'Hare International Airport, Chicago, Ill. 60666

Art prints are frequently of great value in social studies work and furnish useful material for bulletin board displays. Some firms which prepare such materials in inexpensive forms are:

American Museum of Natural History, Chief of Photographic Division, 79th St. and Central Park West, New York, N. Y. 10024
Art Institute of Chicago, Michigan Blvd. & Adams, Chicago, Ill. 60603
The Children's Book Council, Inc., 175 5th Ave., New York, N. Y. 10010 (National Children's Book Week materials)
Colonial Art Company, 1336-1338 N.W. First St., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106
Dept. of the Navy, School & College Relations, Bureau of Navy Personnel, Washington, D. C. 20360 (how to display and respect the flag of the U. S.)
Division of Motion Pictures, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240
Library of Congress, Information and Publications Office, Washington, D. C. 20540
Mentor—UNESCO Art Books. The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 501 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 5th Ave. and 82nd St., New York, N. Y. 10028
Museum of Fine Arts, 465 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. 02115
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St., New York, N. Y. 10019
National Gallery of Art Materials, Public Information Services. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565 (color reproductions and color postcards)
Perry Pictures Co., Box 400, Malden, Mass. 02148
The University Prints, 15 Brattle St., Harvard Square, Cambridge, Mass. 02138
Whitney Museum of American Art, 22 W. 54 St., New York, N. Y. 10019

Other sources of information about free materials are: "Sight and Sound in the Social Studies," a regular department of *Social Education* in which new posters, maps, and other graphic materials are listed; *Aids to Educators*, Educational Relations Section, General Motors Corp., Public Relations, General Motors Technical Center, Warren, Mich. 49094; *Educator's Guide to Free Social Studies Material*, Educator's Progress Service, Randolph, Wisc. 53956; *Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials*, published by George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.; *Free and Inexpensive Materials of World Affairs* by Leonard S. Kenworthy, Bureau of Publicity, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y. 10027; *Free Learning Materials for Classroom Use* by Wagner & Christophel, State College of Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613. Much material about the countries of the world is available also from the various embassies and legations maintained by them in Washington, D. C.

NOTE: This *How To Do It* notebook series, designed for a loose-leaf binder, provides a practical and useful source of classroom techniques for social studies teachers. Elementary and secondary teachers alike will find them helpful. The titles now available in this series are: *How To Use a Motion Picture, How To Use a Textbook, How To Use Local History, How To Use a Bulletin Board, How To Use Daily Newspapers, How To Use Group Discussion, How To Use Recordings, How To Use Oral Reports, How To Locate Useful Government Publications, How To Conduct a Field Trip, How To Utilize Community Resources, How To Handle Controversial Issues, How To Introduce Maps and Globes, How To Use Multiple Books, How To Plan for Student Teaching, How To Study a Class, How To Use Sociodrama, How To Work with the Academically Talented in the Social Studies,* and *How To Develop Time and Chronological Concepts.*